

REMARKS

Claims 1-27 are pending in the current application.

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the pending application. The Non-Final Office Action dated September 8, 2003 has been thoroughly reviewed.

In the Office Action, claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Applicants' Related Art Figures 1-6 (hereinafter "ARA") in view of U.S. Patent 5,982,470 to Nakahara, et al. Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over ARA in view of U.S. Patent 6,172,732 to Hayakawa. Applicants amend claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22, 25, 26, and 27 to more clearly and broadly claim features of Applicants' invention in the claims.

None of the cited references including ARA, Nakahara, or Hayakawa, considered separately or in combination, teaches, discloses, or suggests all of the features of the invention as recited in the claims. For example, claim 1 recites a combination of features including "the first dummy patterns have the same vertical structure as any one of the gate links and the data links and are located in the same layer as the gate links and the data links". The Examiner acknowledges that the ARA does not teach, disclose or suggest this feature.

Nakahara does not disclose or suggest this feature. Nakahara discusses that "an electrode having the same thickness as the sinuous electrode 19 is formed as a dummy electrode" (Nakahara, column 8, lines 32-41). Nakahara does not disclose or suggest "the first dummy patterns have the same vertical structure as any one of the gate links and the data links and are located in the same layer as the gate links and the data links" as required by claim 1. In addition, Hayakawa also does not teach, disclose, or suggest this feature. Hayakawa discusses only "electrodes 46-1 to 46-10 which are made of transparent film and wired in parallel to constitute pixels" (Hayakawa, column 6, lines 8-18). But Hayakawa does not disclose "the first dummy patterns have the same vertical structure as any one of the gate links and the data links and are located in the same layer as the gate links and the data links" as required by claim 1.

Neither Hayakawa nor Nakahara discuss at all that any “dummy patterns...are located in the same layer as the gate links and the data links” as required by the claim.

Furthermore, claims 9 and 17 recite a combination of elements including “the first dummy patterns are formed into the same vertical structure as any one of the gate links and data links and simultaneously with any one of the gate links and the data links”. The Examiner acknowledges that the ARA does not teach, disclose or suggest this feature.

Nakahara does not disclose or suggest this feature. Nakahara discusses that “an electrode having the same thickness as the sinuous electrode 19 is formed as a dummy electrode” (Nakahara, column 8, lines 32-41). Nakahara does not disclose or suggest “the first dummy patterns are formed into the same vertical structure as any one of the gate links and data links and simultaneously with any one of the gate links and the data links” as required by claims 9 and 17. In addition, Hayakawa also does not teach, disclose, or suggest this feature. Hayakawa discusses only “electrodes 46-1 to 46-10 which are made of transparent film and wired in parallel to constitute pixels” (Hayakawa, column 6, lines 8-18). But Hayakawa does not disclose “the first dummy patterns are formed into the same vertical structure as any one of the gate links and data links” as required by claims 9 and 17. Neither Hayakawa nor Nakahara discuss at all that any “dummy patterns are formed...simultaneously with any one of the gate links and the data links” as required by the claims.

Because none of the cited references teaches, discloses, or suggests at least these features of independent claims 1, 9, and 17, these claims are allowable. Dependent claims 2-8 and 25, 10-16 and 26, and 17-27 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on claims 1, 9, and 17, respectively.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. Should the Examiner deem that a telephone call would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (202) 496-7500.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

Rebecca Goldman Rudich

Registration No.: 41,786

MCKENNA LONG & ALDRIDGE LLP

1900 K Street, N.W.

Washington, DC 20006

(202) 496-7500

Attorney for Applicant



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